

REMARKS

At the outset, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Weber for indicating that the claims of the present application are free from the art of record and allowable.

In view of the amendments hereinabove, Applicants provide the following clarification on the reasons why the art of record can not affect the patentability of the claimed invention.

The previous rejection of Claims 10, 11 and 16-22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of Boyd et al (1997) is moot for the following reason. As the Examiner will note, Applicants have canceled Claims 10 and 11. As for Claims 16-22, Applicants note the following.

As noted by the Examiner on page 2 of the Office Action (paper number 10), the labeled proteins in Boyd et al are produced by using recombinant techniques. This means that all the glutamine (“Gln”) residues in the protein are labeled with  $^{15}\text{N}$  or the position of labeling could not be controlled. This fact is discussed on page 3 lines 3-19, of the present specification.

In sharp contrast, according to the present Claim 16, only the *glutamine* residues on which the transglutaminase acts can be labeled with  $^{15}\text{N}$  and the *glutamine* residues on which the transglutaminase does not act can not be labeled with  $^{15}\text{N}$ . The *glutamine* residues which will be labeled with  $^{15}\text{N}$  can be consistently defined as the residues on which transglutaminase can act depending on the individual protein. This is clearly described in Example 3 (see, *e.g.*, the statement: “This clearly indicates that only the glutamine residue on which the transglutaminase acts is labeled with  $\text{N}^{15}$ .” appearing on page 19, lines 11-12).

For these reasons, amended Claim 16, as well as the claims dependent thereon, are not anticipated by Boyd et al (1997).

Application No. 09/850,031

Responsive to the Notice of Allowance dated November 3, 2003

Applicants respectfully request that the amendment be entered.

Respectfully submitted,

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